

# PEER REVIEW REPORT

ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND  
THE COORDINATION ROLE OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE

## NETHERLANDS

GERRY O'HANLON

KATALIN SZÉP

TOMAZ SMREKAR

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Bureau of Statistics (known as Statistics Netherlands (SN)) was established by Royal Decree of 9 January 1899. The current legal basis for SN and its work is the Statistics Netherlands Act of 20 November 2003 (SN Act). In addition, the Autonomous Administrative Authorities Framework Act is applicable as SN became an autonomous authority with legal personality in 2004. Under the Framework Act there is no hierarchical relationship between the Minister of Economic Affairs and SN. However, the Minister of Economic Affairs is politically responsible for legislation and budget and for the creation of conditions for the independent and public production of high quality and reliable statistics. SN's status as an autonomous authority, coupled with the provisions of the Statistics Netherlands Act means that its professional independence, and that of its Director General, is assured both legally and in practice.

Under the SN Act the production of official statistics in the Netherlands is almost entirely under the control of SN and it accounts in practice for around 95% of the statistics produced. SN is a well-resourced professional organisation with 1.777 highly qualified and experienced staff (in full-time equivalent) and has a well earned reputation for developing and using innovative and cost-effective methodologies in the implementation of its statistical programme. Indeed in this regard, SN is recognised as one of the leading National Statistical Institutes (NSI) not only in the European Union but worldwide. The Peer Reviewers identified a number of innovative practices namely: the establishment of an Innovation Lab; strong links with universities; and the use of "big data" in the development of statistical outputs.

While there are some small statistical producers whose output is provided to Eurostat, they are not designated as Other National Authorities. Instead, their output is delivered to Eurostat via SN and the latter has signed several agreements with these producers in order to ensure compliance with the EU regulations (for example, in respect of delivery, quality, and timeliness). In this way SN has assumed effective responsibility at national level for the quality of these statistics.

The Central Commission for Statistics (CCS) is an autonomous body that, under the SN Act (Sections 20-32), has responsibility for a number of tasks related to the management and strategic direction of SN and to the provision of official statistics for central government in general. These tasks include evaluating and approving the multi-annual and annual work programmes of SN. In practice this comes down to the evaluation of the coherence and relevance of the intended programme in relation to society's need for information while taking into account the financial and organisational constraints. Amongst its other tasks, the CCS nominates a candidate for appointment as Director General of SN by the Minister of Economic Affairs.

On the basis of its review, the Peer Review team concluded that SN, and by extension the production of European statistics in the Netherlands, is very highly and uniformly compliant with all principles of the European statistics Code of Practice (CoP). However, increased pressure on resources, the imminent retirement of a large cohort of experienced staff and the impact of wider Civil Service reforms (which *inter alia* envisage the abolition of the CCS) have potentially negative implications for the institutional environment for the production of official statistics in the Netherlands. In addition, the adoption of "big data" type approaches to the provision of certain official statistics will tend to increase the dependency of SN on administrative type data held by a small number of private entities. The absence of a mandatory legal right of access to such data may therefore need to be addressed. These issues are addressed in the report, together with appropriate recommendations, under the heading of Maintaining the Institutional Environment.

In addition, the Peer Reviewers are of the opinion that the level of compliance by SN could be further improved or enhanced through the adoption of a small number of measures in regard to its approach to quality and in respect of the service it provides to users. Accordingly, the issues and associated recommendations are discussed below under the headings:

- Strengthening Quality Management and Assurance; and
- Improving the Service to Users.

In most cases the recommendations are addressed to SN but in a few cases they are directed, without specific designation, to the “appropriate authorities”. In these cases it is assumed that SN will take the initial steps at national level to obtain an appropriate response from these authorities to the recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Maintaining the Institutional Environment**

1. The budgetary authorities should provide Statistics Netherlands with the requisite resources to enable it to implement the agreed statistical programme on a sustainable basis, while continuing to adhere to the highest quality statistical standards. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 3.1 and Principle 4)
2. Statistics Netherlands should endeavour to secure additional resources to invest in the upgrading of its information technology infrastructure in order to have a modern processing environment capable of meeting in the most cost effective manner the ever increasing demand for more sophisticated statistical products. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 3.1 and 10.2)
3. Statistics Netherlands should put in place in a timely manner appropriate recruitment and other human resource management strategies to maintain its skills and knowledge bases in order to address the imminent retirement of a large cohort of highly experienced staff in the short to medium term. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 3.1, 7.5 and 7.6)
4. The relevant national authorities should ensure that, in the context of the Central Commission for Statistics ceasing to exist (as envisaged as part of the wider Civil Service Reform Agenda), appropriate replacement statistical governance and advisory structures are put in place so that the needs of the statistical system can continue to be met in an effective manner. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 to 6 and Coordination)
5. Statistics Netherlands should endeavour to amend the Statistics Netherlands Act so that it has a mandatory right of access to administrative type data held by private entities where such access is required for the production of official statistics in the implementation of the statistical programme. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 2)

### **Strengthening Quality Management and Assurance**

6. Statistics Netherlands should put a greater emphasis on providing a consolidated view of the quality of its statistical outputs and prepare and publish related reports that are in line with European Union standards. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 4.3)
7. Statistics Netherlands should involve to a greater extent, and in a more structured manner, external experts as appropriate in the assessment of its key products and processes. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 4.4)
8. Statistics Netherlands should take measures to embed more deeply its quality management and assurance procedures throughout the organisation and consider also, in the context of external communication, the adoption of recognised industry standard quality assurance/certification systems. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4)

## Improving the Service to Users

9. Statistics Netherlands should further develop and upgrade its dissemination products and tools to improve data accessibility and usability. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 15.1 and 15.2)
10. Statistics Netherlands should systematically publish on its website the available English versions of its metadata reports, particularly those provided to Eurostat using the Euro-SDMX Metadata Standard (ESMS) format. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 15.1 and 15.5)
11. Within the possibilities of the Dutch privacy law and the Statistics Netherlands Act, Statistics Netherlands should aim for more flexible procedures in granting access to confidential microdata for scientific purposes. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.4)
12. Statistics Netherlands should facilitate the increasing number of foreign researchers accessing its microdata for scientific purposes by providing more metadata in English language. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.5)

## 2. INTRODUCTION

This peer review report is part of a series of assessments, the objective of which is to evaluate the extent to which National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) and the European Statistical System (ESS)<sup>1</sup> comply with the European statistics Code of Practice (CoP).

The CoP, which sets out a common quality framework for the ESS, was first adopted in 2005 by the Statistical Programme Committee and updated in 2011 by its successor, the European Statistical System Committee. The CoP – 15 principles and related indicators of good practice – covers the institutional environment, the statistical production process and the output of European statistics. The ESS is committed to fully complying with the CoP and is working towards its full implementation. Periodic assessments review progress towards reaching this goal.

The first global assessment, a round of peer reviews in 2006–2008, explored how the NSIs and Eurostat were progressing in implementing the parts of the CoP relating to the institutional environment and dissemination of statistics (principles 1–6 and 15). This resulted in reports for each NSI and Eurostat, available on the Eurostat website<sup>2</sup>. These reports also include a set of improvement actions covering all the principles of the CoP; these informed the annual monitoring of the implementation of the CoP in the ESS in the period 2009-2013.

The scope of this second round of peer reviews is broader: the assessment of CoP compliance covers all principles; the CoP compliance of selected other national producers of European statistics (as well as the NSI) in each country is assessed; and the way in which statistical authorities coordinate the production and dissemination of European statistics within their statistical systems is explored.

It should be underlined that there is a fundamental difference between the reports in the previous round of peer reviews conducted in 2006-2008 and the reports from this round. In the 2006-2008 round compliance with principles 1 to 6 and 15 of the CoP was assessed by means of a four-level scale (fully met; largely met; partly met and not met) and improvement actions were agreed on all 15 principles. After five years of continuous development most of the improvement actions have been implemented and significant progress towards full compliance with the CoP has been made. Therefore, rather than stating the state of play for all principles of the CoP, the reports from the 2013-2015 round mainly focus on issues where full compliance with the CoP has not been found or further improvements are recommended by the Peer Review team.

In order to gain an independent view, the peer review exercise has been externalised and an audit-like approach, where all the answers to the self-assessment questionnaires have to be supported by evidence, has been applied. As in 2006-2008, all EU Member States, the EFTA/EEA countries and Eurostat are subject to a peer review.

Each peer review in the Member States and EFTA/EEA countries is conducted by three reviewers and has four phases: completion of self-assessment questionnaires by a country; their assessment by Peer Reviewers; a peer review visit; and the preparation of reports on the outcomes. The peer review of Eurostat has been conducted by the European Statistical Governance Advisory Board (ESGAB).

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<sup>1</sup> The ESS is the partnership between the Union statistical authority, which is the Commission (Eurostat), the national statistical institutes (NSIs) and other national authorities responsible in each Member State for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. This Partnership also includes the EFTA /EEA countries.

<sup>2</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality/first-round-of-peer-reviews>

To test and complete the methodology, it was piloted in two countries, Iceland and Slovakia, over the summer of 2013.

The peer review of the Netherlands was conducted by Gerry O'Hanlon (chair), Katalin Szép and Tomaz Smrekar, who conducted a peer review visit to The Hague on 1 to 5 June 2015. The programme of the visit is in Annex A and the list of participants in Annex B.

This report focuses on compliance with the CoP and the coordination of European statistics within the Dutch statistical system. The report highlights some of the strengths of the Netherlands in these contexts and contains recommendations for improvement. Improvement actions developed by Statistics Netherlands on the basis of this report will be published within the four-week period starting when the final report is sent to the NSI.

### 3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM

#### Statistics Netherlands

The Central Bureau of Statistics (known as Statistics Netherlands (SN)) was established by Royal Decree of 9 January 1899. The current legal basis for SN and its work is the Statistics Netherlands Act of 20 November 2003 (SN Act). In addition, the Autonomous Administrative Authorities Framework Act is applicable as SN became an autonomous authority with legal personality in 2004. Under the Framework Act there is no hierarchical relationship between the Minister of Economic Affairs and SN. However, the Minister of Economic Affairs is politically responsible for legislation, the budget and for the creation of conditions for an independent and public production of high quality and reliable statistics. SN's status as an autonomous authority, coupled with the provisions of the SN Act means that its professional independence, and that of its Director General, is assured both legally and in practice.

As laid down in the law, the task of SN is to carry out statistical research on behalf of the government for practice, policy and research purposes and to publish the statistics compiled on the basis of such research. SN, through its Director General, is independent concerning methodology and dissemination. It is mandated to use administrative sources and it is under strong political pressure to reduce the response burden. The use of direct surveys of businesses or households is only permitted when the use of administrative data is not possible or not adequate to fulfil the timeliness or other quality requirements of the statistics. Confidentiality is strictly regulated under the SN Act and the procedures must also be in accordance with data protection legislation.

The mission of SN is to *"publish reliable and coherent statistical information that meets the needs of society"*. In pursuit of this mission, the quality of the statistical information must be guaranteed. Accordingly, SN has introduced a system of quality assurance based on the highest international criteria and also invests considerable resources in the development and implementation of best practice statistical methodology. Overall, SN aims to be one of the best performing NSIs from an international perspective.

SN is organised into five mainline departments: Data Collection; Economic and Business Statistics and National Accounts; Socio-economic and Spatial Statistics; Finance & Control, HRM and Communication; and Process Development, IT and Methodology. Furthermore there is a Central Policy Staff Department and a Department for Methods and Statistical Policy, both of which report directly to the Director General. The Director General and the directors of these departments constitute the Board of Directors of SN.

Multi-annual and annual work programmes are prepared and an annual report is published on the work of SN. In addition to the legally mandated Central Commission for Statistics, whose role and tasks are detailed below, SN is assisted by a number of standing advisory boards, namely: the Statistics Netherlands Advisory Board (chaired by the Director General); the Respondents' Advisory Board; the Economic Statistics Advisory Board; the Statistics of the Living Environment Advisory Board, the Macroeconomic Statistics Advisory Board; the Social Statistics Advisory Board; and the Methodology and Quality Advisory Board (which includes international experts).

The annual budget of SN in 2014 amounted to € 177 million (€ 199 million in 2013) of which 87% was financed by central government and 13% by commissioned work. Almost 2,000 persons were employed in 2014 (1,777 full-time equivalents) and these were distributed almost equally between two locations, one office in The Hague and another in Heerlen. There is also a small office in the Dutch Caribbean (Bonaire). The average age of staff, at 50.7 in 2014, is relatively high and 75% possess a higher education qualification.



## **National Statistical System**

According to the Law, SN is the designated statistical authority in the Netherlands responsible for the production and coordination of European statistics. While there are some small statistical producers whose output is provided to Eurostat, they are not designated as Other National Authorities. Instead, their output is delivered to Eurostat via SN and the latter has signed several agreements with these producers in order to ensure compliance with the EU regulations (for example, in respect of delivery, quality, and timeliness). In this way SN has assumed effective responsibility at national level for the quality of these statistics. The only exception is the Dutch Central Bank which also produces some EU statistics (for example, Balance of Payments statistics and Foreign Direct Investments). A Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed with the Dutch Central Bank to cover the coordination of the overall programme. Overall, therefore, the Netherlands Statistical System is highly centralised with SN accounting for around 95% of all official statistics.

## **Central Commission for Statistics**

The Central Commission for Statistics (CCS) was established by Royal Decree of 6 October 1892. The Commission is now an autonomous body that, under the SN Act (sections 20-32), has responsibility for a number of tasks related to the management and strategic direction of SN and for the provision of official statistics for central government in general.

These tasks of CCS include evaluating and approving the multi-annual and annual work programmes of SN. In practice this comes down to the evaluation of the coherence and relevance of the intended programme in relation to society's need for information while taking into account the financial and organisational constraints. The CCS is also involved in drawing up the budget and the annual accounts of SN. The Director General approves both of these "in agreement with the CCS". Moreover, the annual report of SN must be approved by the CCS.

The CCS also has a number of supervisory tasks with respect to SN:

- It supervises work done by SN for third parties, in order to avoid competition with private providers of similar services which is not desirable from the point of view of free market processes.
- It supervises the collection of information, to make sure that the administrative burden ensuing from this collection is as small as possible for companies and institutions.
- It supervises the Director General's authority to make microdata files available for the purpose of statistical and other research.

Tasks related to the provision of statistical information to central government include the advancement and promotion of official statistics in order to meet the demands of users and the advancement of the accuracy and completeness of statistics published by SN on behalf of the government.

Finally, the CCS nominates a candidate to the Minister of Economic Affairs for appointment as Director General of SN when the position becomes vacant. In the most recent case the CCS played a very active role in the recruitment process.

The CCS consists of a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 11 members (including the chairman) who are appointed by the Minister of Economic Affairs on the basis of recommendations by the CCS. The Commission convenes at least four times a year in the presence of the Director General of SN. The Secretary to the CCS is an employee of SN, designated by the Director General.

## **4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND THE COORDINATION ROLE WITHIN THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM**

### **4.1 STRENGTHS OF THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE IN RELATION TO ITS COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE AND TO ITS COORDINATION ROLE**

Under the SN Act the production of official statistics in the Netherlands is almost entirely under the control of SN and it accounts in practice for around 95% of the statistics produced. SN is a well resourced professional organisation with 1,777 highly qualified and experienced staff (in full-time equivalent) and has a well earned reputation for developing and using innovative and cost-effective methodologies in the implementation of its statistical programme. Indeed, SN is recognised as one of the leading NSIs not only in the EU but worldwide. On the basis of its review, the Peer Review team concluded that SN, and by extension the production of European statistics in the Netherlands, is very highly and uniformly compliant with all CoP principles.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the Dutch statistical system is the concentration of almost all the production in the hands of one well resourced and highly professional organisation that is supported by modern and comprehensive statistical legislation. From a governance/advisory point of view, the Peer Reviewers were also impressed by the arrangements in place in the Netherlands, particularly the legally mandated supervisory role assigned to the CCS under the SN Act<sup>3</sup>. In the following paragraphs the Peer Reviewers draw attention to a number of particular strengths and innovative practises that it identified.

The legal basis for ensuring professional independence is extremely solid (CoP Principle 1). The managerial role of the Director General is set down in Chapter 3 of the SN Act and this includes the explicit provision (Section 18) that *“the director general shall determine the methods by which the studies included in the work programme and the multi-annual programme will be carried out and the manner in which the results of those studies will be published.”* The independence of SN is further bolstered by the fact that SN is an Autonomous Administrative Authority (AAA) operating under the provisions of the Autonomous Administrative Authorities Framework Act. Under this Act the Minister is politically responsible for the budget and the provision of statistical information for the government but there is not a hierarchical relationship between the Minister and the Director General. The involvement of the CCS in the appointment of the Director General is also a positive feature in ensuring professional independence. Under the SN Act the Minister appoints a candidate recommended by the CCS for the position. In 2013 the CCS played a very active role in the entire recruitment process for the appointment of the new Director General up to it nominating the successful candidate to the Minister.

SN also has a very strong focus on using administrative data to the maximum extent and on reducing the burden on respondents (CoP Principles 2, 8 and 9). Under the SN Act, direct surveys can only be undertaken when the required information cannot be obtained, with the required quality, from administrative sources. The Director General is authorised under the SN Act to use data from registers held by public authorities (or held by private entities in the performance of a public function or a function part financed by public funds). In order to maximise its use of

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<sup>3</sup> During the course of the visit the Peer Review team was informed that the CCS may be abolished as part of a wider Civil Service Reform Agenda and its functions assigned to a number of other bodies. This is a matter of some concern and is returned to below in Section 4.2

registers, SN has committed significant resources to developing and implementing internationally recognised methodologies and tools. It has also invested heavily in cooperating with the owners of the registers in order to improve the quality of the data and in the development of common standards and classifications. SN also proactively communicates with the respondents to its direct surveys and takes appropriate steps to minimise the actual burden placed on them. In its communications with respondents SN pays particular attention to addressing the gap between the “perceived” burden of statistical surveys and the actual burden. In the meeting with the main data providers, the efforts of SN in minimising the response burden were fully recognised and highly praised by all participants.

SN has a strong commitment to quality as outlined in its published quality declaration (CoP Principle 4). The very comprehensive Quality Guidelines 2014 serves as a quality assurance framework at process level. Based on an object-oriented quality and risk management model, the guidelines integrate the quality requirements set down in the CoP, in European and national legislation and in adhering to international statistical standards. The guidelines, which have been developed and refined over the past 5 years, form a solid basis for the quality assurance of processes. They are implemented in practice through a comprehensive and integrated system of self-assessment and quality audits.

SN invests significant resources in methodological development and improvement (CoP Principles 7 and 8). This is facilitated by the high quality of its staff and its close working relations with universities and with peers in other NSIs, not just in Europe but worldwide. A set of standard validated methods has been developed and made available not only within SN but also to all interested partners via the web. They cover all the key statistical process phases. Overall, SN has a well-earned reputation of being one of the foremost statistical agencies in respect of methodological development.

In order to ensure the production of statistics in a cost-effective manner (CoP Principle 10), SN has adopted since 2006 and progressively developed and implemented an enterprise architecture that integrates its business and IT architectures. The use of the enterprise architecture is mandatory in the design and redesign of projects and ensures a high degree of standardisation and reusability in the use of software, methodologies and other tools. A Central Architecture Board (CAB) is responsible for overseeing the adherence to the architectural principles and for maintaining a register of standard tools and methodologies. Overall, the enterprise architecture serves to link in an integrated way the strategic goals at the level of the organisation with the individual production lines and activities used for producing statistics.

Finally, SN has well developed dissemination and communications channels through which it distributes its broad range of statistical products and services (CoP Principle 15). These include its website, the StatLine database and an increasing array of new social media products. It also employs a wide variety of methods to keep abreast of user needs, including: standing advisory committees; informal expert groups; user satisfaction surveys; top level meetings with key users and analyses of user behaviour (e.g. use of the web, references in the media and requests received in its Information Centre).

The Peer Reviewers identified many good practices during its examination of SN, which they would not hesitate to recommend for further examination. From the point of view of truly innovative practices it would draw attention to the following:

- The establishment of an Innovation Lab and related programme to stimulate, develop, test and, if proven, implement innovative ideas for statistical production. The Lab offers a reserved space in a prominent location with suitable IT and other resources to test and develop ideas. The ideas are canvassed throughout the organisation and, where possible, the proposer is involved in the testing and development together with a small number of experts. Over the first few years close to 100 ideas have been submitted and approximately half of these have been selected for testing with half again of these being adopted for implementation.
- In order to strengthen its scientific base and attract suitable recruits, SN has developed extremely strong links with a number of universities. At one level it sponsors several temporary professorships in various subfields of official statistics, including register-based statistics, time series, survey methodology, demography and economic indicators. This leads to several PhD students working on topics of relevance to official statistics who are supervised by the sponsored professors or other competent staff within SN. Furthermore, internships are offered to MSc and BSc students and this has proved to be beneficial in attracting highly educated and motivated new staff members. The Peer Review team would consider that the extent to which SN has developed, and benefitted from, these links is worthy of consideration by other NSIs.
- SN is well advanced in the use of “big data” for the development of statistical outputs in a number of domains and is collaborating with a number of national and international technology firms in this area. Some outputs that are already in (or close to) regular production include: use of scanner data for consumer price statistics; use of “internet robots” for monitoring product prices; traffic loop data for transportation statistics. Moreover, research projects are being carried out concerning the use of mobile phone data for daytime population studies and the use of Twitter and other social media data for detecting trends in social cohesion.

## **4.2 ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It will be clear from the previous section that the Peer Review team considers that SN is currently highly compliant with the CoP. However, SN is facing a number of serious challenges, particularly in its institutional environment, which may have a negative impact on its capacity to maintain both the scope and high quality of its statistical programme over the coming years. Furthermore, the Peer Reviewers are of the opinion that the level of compliance could be improved or enhanced through the adoption of a small number of measures in regard to its approach to quality and in respect of the service it provides to users. Accordingly, the issues and associated recommendations are discussed below under the following three headings:

- Maintaining the Institutional Environment;
- Strengthening Quality Management and Assurance; and
- Improving the Service to Users.

In most cases the recommendations are addressed to SN but in a few cases they are directed, without specific designation, to the “appropriate authorities”. In these cases it is assumed that SN will take the initial steps at national level to obtain an appropriate response from these authorities to the recommendations.

## 4.2.1 MAINTAINING THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

As outlined above, the Peer Review team considers that the current institutional environment for statistics in the Netherlands is extremely strong. SN has a virtual monopoly position in regard to the production of official statistics, is well resourced, has a clear mandate to collect data (with a particular focus on the use of administrative data) and all aspects of its work are underpinned by a modern and comprehensive statistical law. Furthermore, the longstanding CCS has a clear governance/advisory legal mandate to oversee the work of SN in an independent and effective manner.

However, mounting pressure on resources, the imminent retirement of a large cohort of experienced staff and the impact of wider Civil Service reforms (which *inter alia* envisage the abolition of the CCS) have potentially negative implications for the production of official statistics in the Netherlands. In addition, the adoption of “big data” type approaches to the provision of certain official statistics will tend to increase the dependency of SN on administrative type data held by a small number of private entities. While SN has developed a policy of fall back scenarios to cater for this dependency, the absence of a mandatory legal right of access to such data may nevertheless need to be addressed.

### Reduced budgetary resources

Between 2009 and 2011 the central budget of SN, provided through the Ministry of Economic Affairs, remained virtually static at around €189 million. However, since then there has been a rapid decline in the allocated budget down to €150 million in 2015 – a fall of over 20% in four years. Further reductions are envisaged in the period up to 2018 - with a decrease of €7 million between 2015 and 2018 already agreed. A further additional reduction of €13 million is still under discussion. Over the entire period, 2011 to 2018, SN must therefore cope with a decline of between a quarter and a third in its budget.

SN is confident that it can cope with the already agreed reduction of €7 million, with only a limited reduction in the scope of the statistical programme but without having to reduce the quality of its statistical outputs to any significant extent. To meet the agreed reductions, a range of proposed programme cutbacks proposed by SN and endorsed by the CCS, were formally set out in an Annex to the published “Statistics Netherlands Strategic multi-annual programme 2014 -2018”. The proposed measures include the discontinuation of certain series and the reduction in frequency and/or scope of other products. Besides, further cost efficiencies will be achieved throughout the organisation thereby enabling it to reduce its staff numbers by approximately 3% per annum on average over the period. A major part of these efficiencies will be found by applying an organisation-wide Lean Six Sigma programme to find efficiency-gains. The Peer Review team considers that responding to the cutbacks will be a major challenge as SN has already achieved major efficiencies in its operations over the past decade or so through the effective use of information technology and the extensive use of administrative data, rather than direct surveys, as the primary data source. SN also proposes to increase its income from commissioned work and also through seeking additional EU funding.

Meeting the additional proposed reduction of € 13 million will not, however, be possible without significant reductions to the scope of the statistical programme. SN and the CCS are in discussions with the Ministry of Economic Affairs on the extent of the proposed cutbacks and a final decision has yet to be taken. The Ministry has suggested as an alternative to central budgetary funding for the entire statistical programme that other Ministries should be invited to contribute to the funding of specific outputs on the basis of their priorities as users. While the Peer Review team would see some merit in this proposal, it would also point to the risks to the sustainability of the programme

associated with the uncertainty in funding that such an approach might bring. Furthermore, the Peer Review team would agree with SN and CCS on the need not to compromise on statistical quality in responding to budgetary cutbacks.

Accordingly, in order to maintain a high level of compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Review team recommends that:**

- 1. The budgetary authorities should provide Statistics Netherlands with the requisite resources to enable it to implement the agreed statistical programme on a sustainable basis, while continuing to adhere to the highest quality statistical standards. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 3.1 and Principle 4)**

In order to respond to the budgetary cutbacks in an orderly and structured manner it will be necessary for SN to use its available reserves to fund its current expenditure over a transitional period. Such reserves would normally be retained to fund special projects or investment in the development or renewal of the capital infrastructure. In discussions with SN management it is clear that it will be necessary for them to invest a significant amount in the renewal/upgrading of its information technology infrastructure within the next three years or so. This stems from the recurring need to keep up to date and also to have the necessary infrastructure capable of handling the challenges posed by "big data" and to meet the demands of more sophisticated users. The Peer Review team is strongly of the view that it is essential to address such requirements without undue delay because of the strategic importance of an up to date information technology platform to a modern NSI.

In order to strengthen compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Review team recommends that:**

- 2. Statistics Netherlands should endeavour to secure additional resources to invest in the upgrading of its information technology infrastructure in order to have a modern processing environment capable of meeting in the most cost effective manner the ever increasing demand for more sophisticated statistical products. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 3.1 and 10.2)**

## **Retirement**

The average age of staff in SN at the end of 2014 was 50.7 years, which reflects the fact that it is an ageing organisation. However, the average age on its own does not convey the full extent to which its age distribution is skewed towards the older age groups. Almost half of all staff are aged 55 or over and these staff are split approximately half and half between those aged 60 and over and those aged between 55 and 59. At the other extreme less than 20% of the staff are less than forty years of age. According to SN management estimates, for the foreseeable future, between 3 and 4% of staff will leave each year on age grounds. This will have a significant impact on an organisation that traditionally has a relatively low rate of staff turnover and that will be under pressure to reduce overall staff numbers in response to its declining budget. SN management acknowledge that it will be necessary for them, as a matter of the highest priority, to increasingly and proactively implement targeted recruitment and other human resource management strategies and tools (such as mentoring) to address this issue in order to maintain its skills and knowledge bases at the required levels.

In order to maintain a high level of compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Review team recommends that:**

- 3. Statistics Netherlands should put in place in a timely manner appropriate recruitment and other human resource management strategies to maintain its skills and knowledge bases in order to address the imminent retirement of a large cohort of highly experienced staff in the short to medium term. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 3.1, 7.5 and 7.6)**

### **Impact of Civil Service reform**

The CCS is assigned under the SN Act a range of duties and responsibilities in regard to the management and guidance of the work of SN. As indicated above the Peer Review team identified this as strength of the Netherlands statistical system. Its role in regard to the adoption of the multi-annual and annual work programmes and the appointment of the Director General are particularly noteworthy.

The Peer Review team was therefore surprised to learn during its visit to The Hague that it is now proposed to abolish the CCS as part of a wider Civil Service reform. The motivation for this decision would appear to be based on the fact that both SN and CCS are classified as Autonomous Administrative Authorities (AAAs) and it is now Government policy to reduce the number of such authorities.

In itself, ceasing to be an AAA would not be an issue if the CSS retained the functions assigned to it under the SN Act and also retained a status independent of SN. While a final decision has yet to be taken on the new structures it would appear that the Ministry of Economic Affairs is not tending towards that option. Instead it is proposing to assign a number of the CCS functions to separate external agencies (for example, agencies dealing with data protection, auditing and top level public service appointments). Under this approach any remaining functions, such as in relation to the statistical programmes, would be assigned to committees established by the Director General that would act under his authority in an advisory manner. The Ministry contends that such an approach would be in line with the overall reform agenda and would not have a negative impact on the independence of SN or on the way the statistical programme will be established.

SN and CCS have the intention to replace some essential elements of the existing system, notably the assignment of a range of functions of a governance/advisory nature to a body that would be mandated to discharge its duties independently of the SN and/or the Director General in order to advise the DG on, inter alia, the establishment of the multi-annual programme and his financial accountability. The Peer Review team would strongly support this stance on the basis that the existing structure in the Netherlands constitutes, in its view, good practice in regard to the availability of effective governance/ advisory arrangements for overseeing the work of an NSI. Indeed, a number of countries have moved towards adopting similar structures in recent years.

Accordingly, in order to ensure that Netherlands continues to have effective statistical governance/advisory structures, **the Peer Review team recommends that:**

- 4. The relevant national authorities should ensure that, in the context of the Central Commission for Statistics ceasing to exist (as envisaged as part of the wider Civil Service Reform Agenda), appropriate replacement statistical governance and advisory structures are put in place so that the needs of the statistical system can continue to be met in an effective manner. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principles 1 to 6 and Coordination)**

### **Access to administrative type data held by private entities**

Under Section 33.2 of the SN Act, the Director General is authorised to use for statistical purposes registers maintained by legal persons (i.e. private entities) provided such registers result from a task *“regulated by or by virtue of the law or which are wholly or partially financed, directly or indirectly, (by) funds provided by the State or from the proceeds of levies imposed by or by virtue of the law”*.

SN does not, therefore, have a legal right to use registers or transaction type data that are maintained by legal persons where such data are not covered by legal provisions or financed by public funds. To the extent that the potential of such data for the production of official statistics (for example, data held by banks and mobile phone companies) is increasingly being explored in the context of “big data” type projects this may prove to be problematic. For example, if a private entity in a monopoly type situation withdraws its cooperation to supply data for the production of statistical outputs, required as part of the agreed statistical programme, then the continuity of the statistical series would be put at risk.

Accordingly, in order to strengthen compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Review team recommends that:**

- 5. Statistics Netherlands should endeavour to amend the Statistics Netherlands Act so that it has a mandatory right of access to administrative type data held by private entities where such access is required for the production of official statistics in the implementation of the statistical programme. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 2)**

### **4.2.2 STRENGTHENING QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE**

Statistics Netherland is very comprehensive and systematic in its approach to quality issues. The quality declaration, available on the website, contains a quality policy and a commitment to adhere to the fullest extent to the CoP. The quality policy describes how SN assures the quality of the statistical outputs and procedures in a cost-effective manner while minimising the burden on respondents and data suppliers. Within SN, the Auditing and Quality Management unit is responsible for the organisation’s quality management system.

#### **Quality reports and reviews involving external experts**

SN has developed its own frameworks for assuring the quality of its statistical processes and outputs. There are two key elements, namely: the series of validated methods; and the “Quality Guidelines 2014” – both of which are available on the SN website. The very comprehensive “Quality Guidelines 2014” serves as a quality assurance framework at process level. Based on an object-oriented quality and risk management model, the guidelines integrate the quality requirements set down in the CoP, in European and national legislation and in adhering to international statistical standards. The guidelines, which have been developed and refined over the past 5 years, form a solid basis for the quality assurance of processes.

SN has identified 250 non-overlapping statistical process lines, partly related to process phases (e.g. data collection) and partly related to subject matter area (e.g. employment statistics), but always belonging to one department. There is a requirement on process managers to conduct an annual self assessment of 78 of these processes that are linked to 18 key statistical outputs. For the remainder, a self assessment must be undertaken every third year. The process description, together with the results of the self-assessment, is documented in the “Quality document”, which also includes the improvement actions identified by the assessment. These quality documents are available to all staff on the SN intranet. The Auditing and Quality Management unit also organises



audits. Professional internal audit teams carry out 10 audits per year covering all the key statistics over a three year period. Also some non-key statistics have to undergo a similar procedure. The audits and the self-assessments are consistent with one another to the extent that they both use the “Quality Guidelines 2014” as the basic reference framework. The whole system is also supported by the availability of templates, guidelines and helpdesk services. Overall, the system of process quality assurance can be seen as a particular strength of SN.

However, despite the availability of extensive information on process quality, there is no systematic focus on the preparation of detailed quality reports on statistical outputs that could draw on these and other sources in a consolidated manner. Metadata with some information on quality are published in Dutch on the web, linked to the statistical outputs, but they do not cover all the quality criteria laid down in European legislation and/or in the quality declaration of SN. Furthermore, in spite of the fact that SN regularly prepares and sends quality information to Eurostat in different forms (Euro-SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), ESS Standard for Quality Reports (ESQR), or other specific quality reports) in English, they are not available on the SN website.

While the Peer Review team is satisfied that there is a strong focus in practice on the quality of statistical outputs throughout SN, it believes that there are significant benefits to be gained from preparing more quality assessments of statistical outputs that are based on a consolidated examination of quality across the entire production chain.

The Peer Reviewers are also of the opinion that, in line with indicator 4.4 of the CoP, SN should involve to a greater extent, and in a more structured manner, external experts as appropriate in the assessment of its key statistics.

Accordingly, in order to improve compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Review team recommends that:**

- 6. Statistics Netherlands should put a greater emphasis on providing a consolidated view of the quality of its statistical outputs and prepare and publish related reports that are in line with European Union standards. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 4.3)**
- 7. Statistics Netherlands should involve to a greater extent, and in a more structured manner, external experts as appropriate in the assessment of its key products and processes. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 4.4)**

### **Quality management system**

As already indicated, the “Quality Guidelines 2014” serve as a comprehensive reference framework for implementing quality management and assurance within SN. Furthermore, it was clear from the completed Self-Assessment Questionnaire that SN management see adherence to the Guidelines as providing the basic proof of its compliance with the vast majority of the principles and indicators of the CoP. Accordingly, the Peer Review team expected that there would be a deep awareness at all levels within SN of the importance of the Guidelines and their implementation in practice. However, evidence of such awareness did not come through uniformly to the team during its meetings with SN staff – this was particularly the case in the meeting with Junior Staff. Accordingly, the Peer Reviewers consider that measures should be taken to embed more deeply the quality management and assurance procedures throughout the organisation.

Many of the elements of a formal and externally certified total quality management system (such as International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 9001 or European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)) are followed in the quality management procedures applied in SN. For example, many of the elements of the Quality Guidelines are similar to those of ISO 9001. Up to now SN has not sought to adopt any of these well known total quality management systems but the Peer Reviewers were informed that active consideration is now being given to seeking ISO

9001 certification. The Peer Review team would support this initiative as it considers it would help, on the one hand, to foster a greater awareness of quality within SN and, on the other, assist it in communicating its commitment to quality to a wider external audience.

In order to further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Review team recommends that:**

- 8. Statistics Netherlands should take measures to embed more deeply its quality management and assurance procedures throughout the organisation and consider also, in the context of external communication, the adoption of recognised industry standard quality assurance/certification systems. (European statistics Code of Practice, Principle 4)**

### **4.2.3 IMPROVING THE SERVICE TO USERS**

SN has a dissemination policy, which is applied systematically and is published on its website. SN uses a wide variety of dissemination and communication channels including: its website; the dissemination database StatLine; the open data StatLine App for tablets and smartphones; books and other hard copy publications; Twitter; and YouTube. It also operates an Information Centre and Micro Data Service Centre to reach and communicate with users and researchers. It regularly produces a wide range of products and services such as: news releases, web articles, policy initiated analyses, detailed tables, visuals, papers on methodology, teaching materials for teachers and students, Tweets and micro datasets for research purposes.

SN is assisted by a number of standing advisory boards, namely: the Statistics Netherlands Advisory Board (chaired by the Director General); the Respondents' Advisory Board; the Economic Statistics Advisory Board; the Statistics of the Living Environment Advisory Board; the Macroeconomic Statistics Advisory Board; the Social Statistics Advisory Board; and the Methodology and Quality Advisory Board (which includes international experts). The membership of these senior level Boards includes: senior civil servants; private sector directors; directors of policy research and analysis institutes; the Central Bank; local government organisations; and university professors. Key users such as ministries, local government organisations and policy research institutes are systematically consulted every year at senior level by the Director General and SN directors. SN also facilitates the active involvement of a wider range of users through user committees, focus groups, expert groups and panels. These groups are consulted regularly and also focus on technical or methodological issues.

More generally, SN regularly monitors the needs of its users through a variety of surveys and indicators. These include: user satisfaction surveys; analyses of the use of the website and StatLine tables; number of copies of books sold; use of statistics in Parliament; references in the media; and data requests to the Information Service.

Overall, the Peer Reviewers were informed by users that they highly appreciate and value the quantity and quality of the service provided by SN. Positive comments were made on the website (information, key figures, publications, release calendar, a product catalogue organised by theme and by dossier, and information based on policy-related analyses) and especially in regard to StatLine (cost free databank of detailed figures). The relatively new SN Twitter account has also proved to be very effective with over 100,000 followers.

On the other hand, the Peer Reviewers were told by different users, both expert and casual, that finding and accessing the required information can sometimes be difficult. This is particularly the case in regard to using StatLine, which is not considered to be user friendly even by expert users. The Peer Review team was informed that the problem with StatLine is not with its functionality, as its strengths are still widely recognised, but with the fact that it was developed almost twenty years ago using a technology that has now been superseded by recent developments. Other criticisms

mentioned include: the discontinuation of some statistics, especially long time series, due to budgetary cuts and the limitations on the graphics and other visual representations of the data because of the use of old technology.

SN informed the Peer Reviewers that it was aware of these challenges and is taking steps to address them including the planned launch of a new website in 2015. It is also planning to re-organise its dissemination and communications services along the lines of those adopted by news agencies, while maintaining a strong focus on impartiality and objectivity. The Peer Review team would welcome and support these and other initiatives to improve data accessibility and usability

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 9. Statistics Netherlands should further develop and upgrade its dissemination products and tools to improve data accessibility and usability. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 15.1 and 15.2)**

While there is a substantial amount of content available in English on the SN website there are some omissions. One weakness is the limited availability of metadata in English. The ESMS reports, which are prepared in English and forwarded to Eurostat, are not systematically or readily available on the website. The Peer Review team believes that it would be of considerable benefit to foreign users to have these reports readily available on the SN website.

Accordingly, to further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 10. Statistics Netherlands should systematically publish on its website the available English versions of its metadata reports, particularly those provided to Eurostat using the Euro-SDMX Metadata Standard (ESMS) format. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicators 15.1 and 15.5)**

There is a strong demand from the research community for use of SN's microdata sets. SN has had a Micro Data Service Centre for external researchers for about 15 years. This is in line with international good practice that has been adopted by a number of NSIs around the world.

The Micro Data Service Centre provides access to microdata in a secure surrounding, both on-site and through remote access. SN has over 100 remote access connections in the Netherlands and over 12 connections outside the Netherlands with contracted research institutes. Rules and protocols for access to the microdata are published on the SN website. SN provides metadata information in Dutch and support for the databases the researchers want to use. All output is checked for disclosure before it is sent to the researcher. SN asks for the reports based on the microdata research and publishes them on its website. The ability to link datasets from different sources within the secure setting is particularly welcomed by researchers.

The granting of microdata access for research purpose must follow a transparent accreditation process, which is determined by the legal requirements for statistical confidentiality and data protection. The procedures include security declarations from both the research institutes and the external researchers concerned and the procedures. Once the right to access the data is granted each individual project is also judged. No distinction is made between data with high and low risks of disclosure – as this is not provided for in the law. Some researchers informed the Peer Review team that microdata is being underutilised because of the accreditation process and they would favour a more flexible approach. In many respects the access requirements applying in the Netherlands through binding privacy legislation might be characterised as a “risk avoidance” approach rather than the more flexible “risk management” approach that is increasingly being adopted in other countries. While accepting that privacy and data protection legislation is very

strict in the Netherlands, the Peer Review team would nevertheless urge SN to examine how a more flexible system for accreditation might be put in place.

Another issue raised by researchers is the availability only in Dutch of relevant metadata. This is proving to be a barrier for foreign researchers, including those located in Dutch universities and research agencies. The Peer Review team would recommend making more metadata available in English to facilitate these researchers.

To further enhance compliance with the CoP, **the Peer Reviewers recommend that:**

- 11. Within the possibilities of the Dutch privacy law and the Statistics Netherlands Act, Statistics Netherlands should aim for more flexible procedures in granting access to confidential microdata for scientific purposes. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.4)**
- 12. Statistics Netherlands should facilitate the increasing number of foreign researchers accessing its microdata for scientific purposes by providing more metadata in English language. (European statistics Code of Practice, indicator 15.5)**

### **4.3 NATIONAL STATISTICAL INSTITUTE VIEWS WHERE THEY DIVERGE FROM PEER REVIEWERS' ASSESSMENT**

Statistics Netherlands would like to thank the peer review team for their thorough, objective and professional work and for the constructive discussions during the peer review visit. Statistics Netherlands acknowledges that the areas identified for further improvements are relevant. Some of them are part of the Strategic agenda of Statistics Netherlands and consequently already in the implementation phase, for example the Strategic HR plan, the Quality Management Programme and the Renewal of ICT infrastructure and organisation.

Regarding recommendation 1 - which states that the budgetary authorities should provide Statistics Netherlands with the requisite resources to enable it to implement the agreed statistical programme on a sustainable basis, while continuing to adhere to the highest quality standards - Statistics Netherlands would like to underline that in this regard there is also a responsibility of the European Commission to intensify efforts to reduce statistical demand and to achieve results in effective negative priority setting at European level, thereby helping Statistics Netherlands to maintain enough resources to meet national user needs.

Statistics Netherlands has no diverging views from the Peer Reviewers' findings.

# ANNEX A: PROGRAMME OF THE VISIT

## AGENDA

### Peer review visit – Statistics Netherlands 1-5 June, 2015

Day 1 – Monday 1 June 2015			
Time		Programme	Participants
09.00–10.30	1	PR team discussion to finalise the preparation of the visit.	PR team
10.30-10.45		Coffee break	
10.45–12.00	2	Preparatory meeting with the NSI Coordinator Team to discuss practical aspects of the visit	National Coordinator Team
12.00-12.30	3	Welcome and introduction of programme, organisational matters	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Tjark Tjin-A-Tsoi, Bert Kroese, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
12.30-13.15		Lunch	
13.15-14.45	4	General information session with a description on how the national statistical system is organised <i>Presentation by Carina Fransen</i>	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Bert Kroese, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
14.45-15.00		Coffee break	
15:00–17:00	5	Quality - organisational structure, tools, monitoring (CoP principles 4 and 11-15) <i>Presentation by Douwe Kuurstra</i>	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Kees Zeelenberg, Douwe Kuurstra, Max Booleman, Peter van Nederpelt, Frans Hoeve, Paul van der Laan, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen.
Day 2 – Tuesday 2 June 2015			
Time		Programme	Participants
10.00-10.30		Visit to Innovation Lab	Barteld Braaksma
10.45-12.00	6	Meeting with Chair of Central Commission for Statistics (CCS)	CCS: Inge Brakman (Chair), <i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen, Monique Tóth Pál (Secretary, CCS)
12.00-13.00		Lunch	
13.00-13.45	7	Meeting with Ministry of Economic Affairs	<i>Ministry of Economic Affairs</i> Maloe Bosch, Petra Smitsen Michelle Paauw <i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
13.45–15.15	8	Main users –Ministries and other public/private institutions (including Central Bank as a user)	<i>Ec:</i> Maloe Bosch, Frans Suijker <i>DNB:</i> Pim Claassen, Diederik Decou, <i>Soc:</i> Magdaleen de Schepper, <i>CPB:</i> Bas ter Weel <i>Statistics Netherlands:</i>

			Frans Hoeve, Paul van der Laan, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
15.15-15.30		Coffee break	
15.30-17.00	9	Meeting with main users – Scientific Community	<i>Scientific Community</i> Prof. Maarten van Ham, Prof. Peter van der Heijden, Prof. Bas Jacobs <i>Statistics Netherlands</i> Kees Zeelenberg, Ruben Dood, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
17.30-19.00	10	Meeting with the Media	Nanda Troost ( <i>Volkscrant</i> ) Menzo Willems ( <i>Telegraaf</i> ) <i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Carina Fransen, Henriette de Jong-de Heer

### Day 3 – Wednesday 3 June 2015

Time	Programme		Participants
09.00 –10.30	11	The statistical law and related legislation - (CoP principles 1, 2, 5 and 6)	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Ingrid Wezel, Peter Barendswaard, Max Booleman, Peter van Nederpelt, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
10.30 –10.45		Coffee break	
10.45 –12.45	12	Programming, planning and resources (including training) (CoP principles 3, 9 and 10)	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Wim van Nunspeet, Martin van Adrichem, Wouter-Jan van Muiswinkel, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
12.45–13.30		Lunch	
13.30–15.15	13	Dissemination including user consultation (CoP principles 6, 11 and 15)	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Wim van Nunspeet, Cees Buijs, Ruben Dood, Max Booleman, Wouter-Jan van Muiswinkel, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
15.15-15.30		Coffee break	
15.30–17.00	14	Meeting with main data providers/respondents	Michaël van Straalen (Chair Response Board, Paul van Kempen ( <i>MKB NL</i> ), Diantha Croese( <i>UWV</i> ), John van Grinsven ( <i>Dutch Tax and Customs Administration</i> ), <i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen

### Day 4 – Thursday 4 June 2015

Time	Programme		Participants
09.00–11.00	15	Methodology, data collection, data processing and administrative data (CoP principles 2, 7, 8 and 9)	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Wim van Nunspeet, Harrie

			Wijnhoven, Magchiel van Meeteren, Anita Vaasen, Mark van der Loo, Evrim Onat, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
11.00-11.15		Coffee break	
11.15-11.45	16	Meeting with the works council	<i>Statistics Netherlands</i> Bianca Wouters Aarts, Peter Kruiskamp Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
11.45-12.45	17	Coordination role of NSI	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Kees Zeelenberg, Gerard Eding, Paul van der Laan, Frans Hoeve, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
12:45-13.30		Lunch	
13.30 -15.00	18	Meeting with junior staff	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Farley Ishaak, Marten Jan van Rijn, Carlijn Verkleij, Thomas Slager, Manuela Schols, Michel Hayen, Marijn Beelen, Jessica Solcer
15.00 -15.15		Coffee break	
15.15-16.15	19	Cooperation / level of integration of the ESS	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Bert Kroese, Kees Zeelenberg, Olav ten Bosch, Frans Hoeve, Paul van der Laan, Lieneke Hoeksma, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen
16.15-16.30		Stock-taking meeting	<i>Statistics Netherlands:</i> Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen

**Day 5 – Friday 5 June 2015**

<b>Time</b>		<b>Programme</b>	<b>Participants</b>
09.00 – 10.45	20	PR team discussion	
10.45 – 11.00		Coffee break	
11.00- 13.00		Meeting with senior management: conclusions and recommendations	Board of Directors, Cecile Schut, Carina Fransen



## ANNEX B. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

	<b>Peer Review Team</b>
1	<b>Mr Gerry O’Hanlon</b> (chair)
2	<b>Ms Katalin Szép</b>
3	<b>Mr Tomaz Smrekar</b>
	<b>Eurostat observer</b>
4	<b>Mr. Antonio Baigorri</b> , Head of Task Force Peer reviews
	<b>Statistics Netherlands Senior Management</b>
5	<b>Mr Tjark Tjin-A-Tsoi</b> , Director-General
6	<b>Mr Bert Kroese</b> , Deputy Director-General
7	<b>Ms Cecile Schut</b> , Director Policy Staff
8	<b>Mr Kees Zeelenberg</b> , Senior Director of Methods and Statistical Policy (DKA)
9	<b>Mr Wim van Nunspeet</b> , Senior Director of Operational Management and Communication (BVC) and Senior Director of Process development, IT and methodology (PIM)
10	<b>Mr Harry Wijnhoven</b> , Senior Director of Data Collection (DVZ)
11	<b>Ms Hanneke Imbens</b> , Senior Director of Economic and Business Statistics and National Accounts (EBN)
12	<b>Mr Huib van de Stadt</b> , Senior Director of Socio-economic and Spatial Statistics (SER)
	<b>National Coordinator Team</b>
13	<b>Ms Carina Fransen</b> , Head of International Relations Department
14	<b>Ms Laura Lelieveld</b> , International Relations Officer
15	<b>Mr Max Booleman</b> , Senior Methodologist DKA
16	<b>Mr Mark van der Loo</b> , Senior Methodologist PIM
17	<b>Mr Paul van der Laan</b> , Senior Policy Advisor SER
18	<b>Mr Frans Hoeve</b> , Programme Manager EBN
19	<b>Mr Wouter Jan van Muiswinkel</b> , Senior Policy Advisor BVC
20	<b>Mr Evrim Onat</b> , senior Policy Advisor DVZ
21	<b>Mr Sander Spoelstra</b> , Senior Policy Advisor PIM
22	<b>Mr Peter van Nederpelt</b> , Senior Policy Advisor DKA
	<b>Other Statistics Netherlands staff</b>

23	<b>Mr Douwe Kuurstra</b> , Head of Quality Management and Auditing
24	<b>Ms Monique Tóth Pál</b> , Senior Policy Advisor (Secretary of the CCS)
25	<b>Mr Ruben Dood</b> , Director Centre for Policy Related Statistics
26	<b>Ms Ingrid Wezel</b> , Senior Policy and Legal Advisor
27	<b>Mr Peter Barendswaard</b> , Policy and Legal Advisor
28	<b>Mr Martin van Adrichem</b> , Director of Planning & Control
29	<b>Mr Cees Buijs</b> , Director of Communication
30	<b>Ms Henriette de Jong-De Heer</b> , Head of the Communication dept.
31	<b>Mr Magchiel van Meeteren</b> , Director Data Collection
32	<b>Ms Anita Vaasen</b> , Senior Policy Advisor EBN
33	<b>Mr Gerard Eding</b> , Director of National Accounts
34	<b>Mr Olav ten Bosch</b> , senior Statistical Researcher
35	<b>Ms Lieneke Hoeksma</b> , head of the translation unit
36	<b>Mr Farley Ishaak</b> , Statistical Researcher EBN
37	<b>Mr Marten Jan van Rijn</b> , Statistical Researcher EBN
38	<b>Ms Carlijn Verkleij</b> , Statistical Researcher SER
39	<b>Mr Thomas Slager</b> , Statistical Researcher SER
40	<b>Ms Manuela Schols</b> , Statistical Researcher DVZ
41	<b>Mr Michel Hayen</b> , Statistical researcher DVZ
42	<b>Ms Marijn Beelen</b> , Policy Advisor BVC-Comm
43	<b>Ms Jessica Solcer</b> , Methodologist PIM
44	<b>Ms Bianca Wouters-Aarts</b> , Chair Works Council
45	<b>Mr Peter Kruiskamp</b> . Member Works Council
	<b>Central Commission for Statistics</b>
46	<b>Ms Inge Brakman</b> , Chair
	<b>Representatives of the scientific community</b>
47	<b>Mr Maarten van Ham</b> , Professor of Urban Renewal at Delft University and professor of Geography at the University of St. Andrews
48	<b>Mr Peter van der Heijden</b> , Professor of Social sciences, Utrecht University
49	<b>Mr Bas Jacobs</b> , Professor of Economics affairs, Erasmus University Rotterdam,

	<b>Main users – Ministries and other public bodies</b>
50	<b>Ms Maloe Bosch</b> , Policy advisor, Ministry of Economic Affairs
51	<b>Ms Petra Smits</b> , Ministry of Economic Affairs
52	<b>Ms Michelle Paauw</b> , Ministry of Economic Affairs
53	<b>Mr Frans Suijker</b> , Ministry of Economic Affairs
54	<b>Mr Pim Claassen</b> , Dutch National Bank
55	<b>Mr Diederik Decou</b> , Head of Economic Policy department, Dutch National Bank
56	<b>Ms Magdaleen de Schepper</b> , Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment
57	<b>Mr Bas ter Weel</b> , Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (CPB)
	<b>Main users - Media</b>
58	<b>Mr Menzo Willems</b> , journalist “De Telegraaf”
59	<b>Ms Nanda Troost</b> , journalist “De Volkskrant”
	<b>Main data providers</b>
60	<b>Mr Michaël van Straalen</b> , Director of MKB NL; Chair of Respondents Advisory Board
61	<b>Mr Paul van Kempen</b> , MKB NL
62	<b>Ms Diantha Croese</b> , Manager Employee Insurance Agency (UWV)
63	<b>Mr John van Grinsven</b> , Dutch Tax and Customs Administration